



Amy G. Rabinowitz  
*Assistant General Counsel*

July 25, 2005

Mary L. Cottrell, Secretary  
Department of Telecommunications and Energy  
One South Station  
Boston, MA 02110

**Re: D.T.E. 04-116**

Dear Secretary Cottrell:

On behalf of Massachusetts Electric Company and Nantucket Electric Company, I am enclosing our responses to the Department's third set of information requests to all participants.

Thank you very much for your time and attention to this matter.

Very truly yours,

Amy G. Rabinowitz

Responses to the Department's Third Set of Information Requests to All Participants

DTE-A 3-1

Request:

Please provide, for all gas and electric companies in the United States with a telephone answering performance measure, a description of the measure, the name of company, and the docket or other citation where the measure was adopted.

Response:

Mass. Electric has a telephone answering performance measure included in its service quality plan, approved by the Department in DTE 01-71B. The measure is based on calls answered within 20 seconds. The current benchmark is based on Mass. Electric's historical performance data from 1997 to 2004. The other gas and electric distribution companies within Massachusetts also have a telephone answering performance measure included in their respective service quality plans, promulgated by the Department in DTE 99-84.

Mass. Electric's affiliated company in Rhode Island, Narragansett Electric Company, has a telephone answering performance measure included in its service quality plan described in RIPUC Docket No. 3628. The measure is based on calls answered within 20 seconds, including calls completed in an automated system. The benchmark is based on Narragansett Electric's historical performance data from 1996 to 2004.

Mass. Electric's affiliated company in New York, Niagara Mohawk Power Corporation, has a telephone answering performance measure included in its service quality assurance program described in PSC Case No. 01-M-0075, Attachment 9, Section 9.2.2. The measure is based on the percent of calls answered within 30 seconds, with the current benchmark set at 75 percent.

The Company does not have specific data on telephone answering performance measures for any other companies in the United States.

Prepared by or under the supervision of: Robert H. McLaren

Responses to the Department's Third Set of Information Requests to All Participants

DTE-A 3-2

Request:

Please discuss the feasibility of adopting a telephone answering performance measure described below:

- (a) Eighty percent of telephone calls answered within 30 seconds, as defined by a customer receiving and selecting between the option to receive automated information (e.g., account balance) and speaking with a customer service representative;
- (b) Eighty percent of telephone calls answered within 40 seconds, with the same parameters as in (a);
- (c) Eighty percent of telephone calls answered within 60 seconds, with the same parameters as in (a);
- (d) Seventy-five percent of telephone calls answered within 30 seconds, with the same parameters as in (a);
- (e) Seventy-five percent of telephone calls answered within 40 seconds, with the same parameters as in (a);
- (f) Seventy-five percent of telephone calls answered within 60 seconds, with the same parameters as in (a);
- (g) Seventy-five percent of telephone calls answered within 20 seconds, with the same parameters as in (a).

Response:

While it would be feasible for the Department to adopt any one of the telephone answering performance measures described above, Mass. Electric would recommend the first option: Eighty percent of telephone calls answered within 30 seconds, as defined by a customer receiving and selecting between the option to receive automated information (e.g., account balance) and speaking with a customer service representative. This call response standard would be a reasonable uniform benchmark for all utilities to achieve.

The Company further recommends that this performance measure be structured so that for each percentage point that a company's performance falls below the 80 percent benchmark, the company would be assessed a penalty equal to 20 percent of the total penalty allocated to the telephone answering performance measure. The maximum penalty for this measure would be incurred at a performance level of 75 percent.

Responses to the Department's Third Set of Information Requests to All Participants

Likewise, for each percentage point that a company's performance is above the 80 percent benchmark, the company would be allowed an incentive or penalty offset equal to 20 percent of the total incentive or offset allocated to the telephone answering performance measure. The maximum incentive or offset for this measure would be incurred at a performance level of 85 percent.

Prepared by or under the supervision of: Robert H. McLaren